

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 003219

NODIS

FOR SCRANTON

FOL RPT MAPUTO 0017 ACTION SECSTATE 6 JAN QUOTE

S E C R E T MAPUTO 0017

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY AND SCHAUFLE FROM EDMONDSON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, RH

SUBJ: RHODESIA: THRUST OF RICHARD'S MISSION

1. FOLLOWING DEBRIEFING ON IVOR RICHARD'S TALK WITH
PRESIDENT KHAMA (GABORONE SEPTTEL) I ASKED RICHARD AGAIN
WHETHER HE HAD DISCUSSED WITH IAN SMITH THE MATTER OF
GETTING AFRICAN ASSURANCES ON CESSATION OF GUERRILLA WAR-
FARE. HE SAID HE HAD NOT ALTHOUGH AT ONE POINT HE HAD
ASKED WHETHER ACCEPTING A BRITISH RESIDENT COMMISSIONER
WOULD NOT BE WORTHWHILE IF IT PRODUCED AN END TO THE WAR.

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IT WAS THIS QUESTION APPARENTLY WHICH PRODUCED SMITH'S RETORT
THAT THE RHODESIAN'S WOULD RATHER FIGHT ON THAN ACCEPT A
BRITISH COMMISSIONER, A REMARK RICHARD DOES NOT BELIEVE
AND WHICH HE THINKS SIMPLY REFLECTS SMITH'S DISBELIEF THAT
GUERRILLA WAR WOULD REALLY END.

2. RICHARD ADMITTED THAT HIS EMPHASIS ON ENDING THE WAR

WAS A RELATIVELY NEW ELEMENT IN HIS TALKS. ALTHOUGH PART OF THE ORIGINAL FIVE POINTS, IT HAD BEEN TAKEN MORE OR LESS FOR GRANTED AT GENEVA. IN HIS TALKS WITH KAUNDA IT HAD BEEN MORE OR LESS ASSUMED THAT GUERRILLA WARFARE WOULD STOP ONCE AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT WAS SET UP.

3. NOTING THAT A DOZEN OR SO REPORTERS WERE WAITING FOR A PRESS CONFERENCE WITH RICHARD, I ASKED WHETHER HE WAS PURSUING A PARTICULAR MEDIA OBJECTIVE, BY ARRANGING SUCH FREQUENT CONFERENCES WITH THE PRESS OR SIMPLY TRYING TO SATISFY THEIR PRESSURES TO SEE HIM. HE ANSWERED THAT HE WAS TRYING TO PROJECT THE IDEA THAT SOME POSITIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT ENDING GUERRILLA WARFARE COULD HELP THE SITUATION, THE SAME IDEA THAT HE WAS PURSUING IN HIS TALKS NOW.

4. IT IS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS YET WHETHER THE POINT 5 ISSUE OF CEASING GUERRILLA WARFARE IS A REAL ONE THAT CAN KEEP THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS GOING AND WIN VORSTER OVER OR WHETHER IT IS GRASPING AT STRAWS. AS FAR AS THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IS CONCERNED IT MAY BE THE LATTER. AS A CONTINUING ISSUE, HOWEVER, IT MAY BE OF SOME IMPORTANCE BECAUSE, LIKE SOMETHING NYERERE SAID EARLIER IN THE YEAR, WARFARE CAN CONTINUE BUT SETTLEMENT WILL REQUIRE TALKS AT SOME STAGE. SMITH MAY NOT BE INTERESTED AT THIS TIME BUT OTHER WHITE RHODESIANS MAY BECOME MORE AND MORE INTERESTED AS THE WAR GRINDS ON.
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